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15 March 1963

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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE BULLETIN



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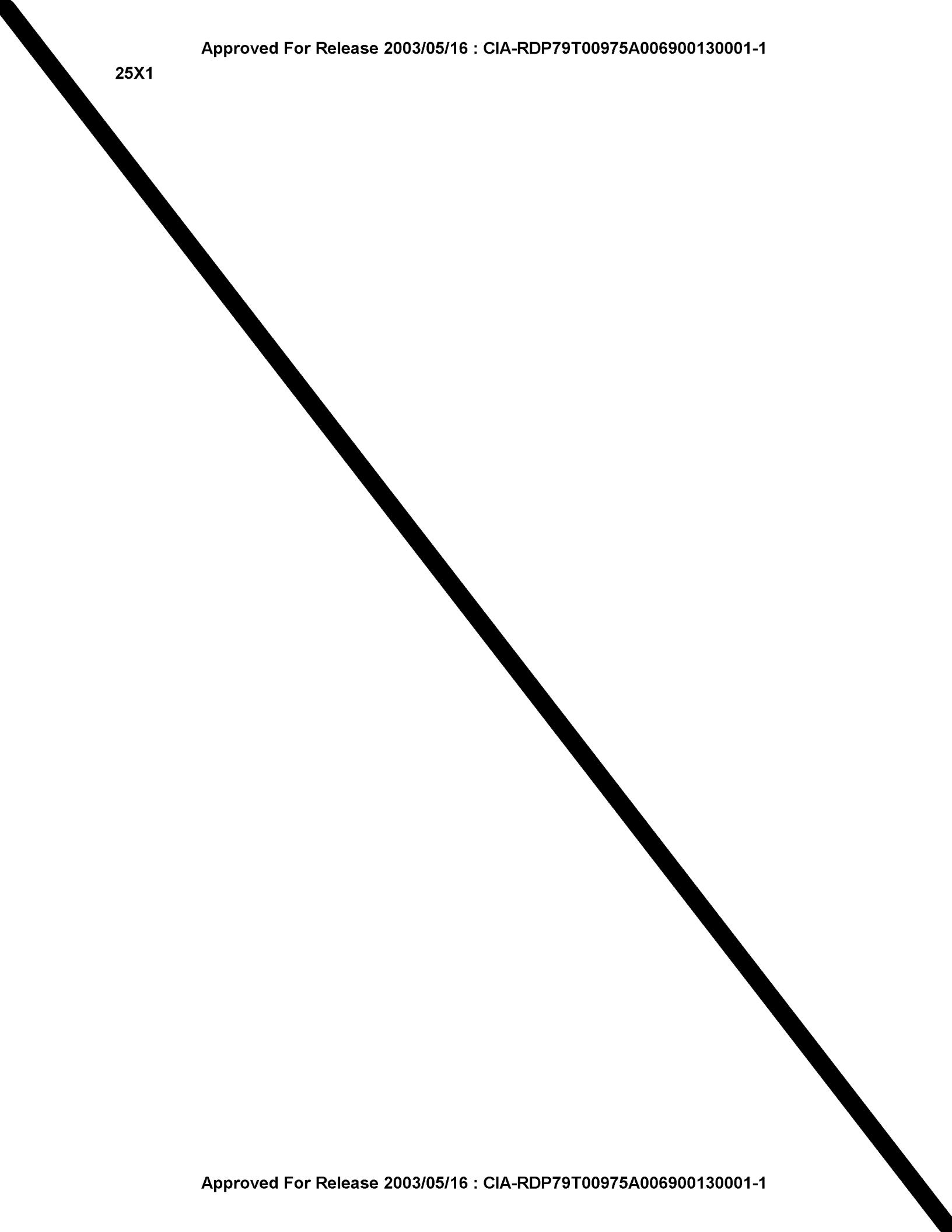
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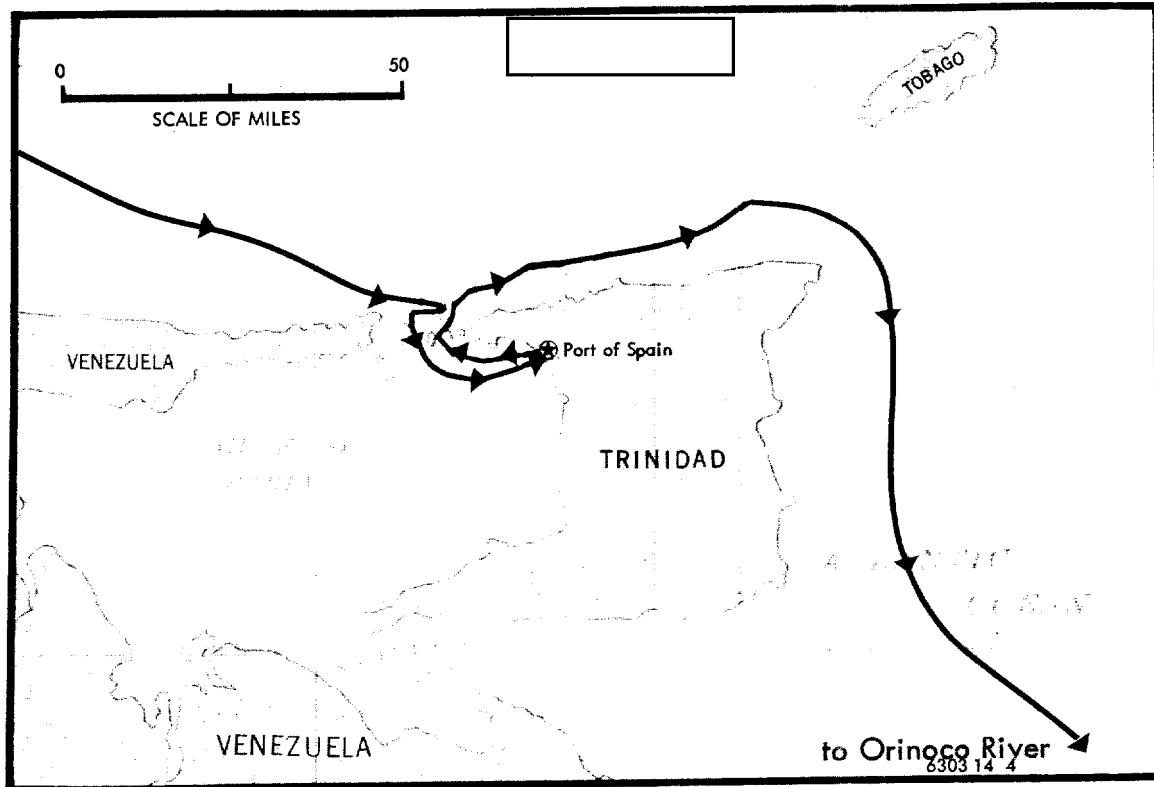
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PATH OF CANNAREGIO



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*The Cannaregio: [The Italian freighter Cannaregio, which has been suspected of carrying materiel from Cuba to Venezuelan dissidents, entered the Orinoco River on 14 March en route to the Venezuelan port of Matanzas. According to a report from the US destroyer escort Claud Jones, a boarding party from the Venezuelan destroyer General Flores was sent to meet the Cannaregio. No information is available regarding the actual boarding.]

[A review of reports pertaining to surveillance of the Cannaregio's movements on 12 March indicates that her behavior was actually not suspicious. Prior to being approached by the General Flores on 12 March, the Cannaregio apparently had not entered the Gulf of Paria but, because of fog and rain, was hugging the northern coast of Venezuela and trying to get her bearings.]

[The weather not only made shadowing difficult but apparently caused the Cannaregio to overshoot the Dragon's Mouth and then double back to enter the gulf. It was at this time that the Venezuelan destroyer passed the US destroyer escort shadowing at 15 miles, and closed in on the freighter.]

[Once inside the Gulf of Paria, the Cannaregio anchored and asked for instructions, then proceeded as directed to a better position for bunkering, which is customarily done by barge at Port-of-Spain.]

(Map)

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Cuba-USSR: [US Time-Life correspondent Edmund Stevens, returning to the USSR following a two-week visit to Cuba, has given his impressions to Ambassador Kohler.]

[Soviet personnel in Cuba, according to Stevens, are expressing disgust over their situation there. Some referred to Soviet economic aid as "pouring money down a rat-hole." A Soviet military official, one of Stevens' 39 fellow passengers on the TU-114 flight from Havana to Moscow, complained about the "enormous cost" of operating such flights.]

[Stevens also reported that the Cubans preferred Czechs and Poles to Russians, who were considered "cold, unsociable, and stingy." Similar sentiments have been expressed in the past]

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[Stevens commented on the effectiveness of the propaganda work being done among the large Chinese-Cuban element of the population by Chinese Communist Embassy personnel. These personnel, he observed, blended well into the local scene whereas the Soviets were quite conspicuous.]

[Stevens also gained the impression that the Castro regime has achieved a stabilized position based on a system of "organized confusion." He concluded that for a variety of reasons no internal uprising is likely now, but that the general economic situation is continuing to worsen.]

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*Syria: Nasir's clandestine radio has sharply attacked the new Syrian regime and has called for immediate restoration of the union between Syria and Egypt which was severed in September 1961.

This attack may have been brought about by Damascus' refusal to allow five Syrians who had been ministers in the Egyptian-Syrian union to return from their exile in Cairo. When the men arrived at the Damascus airport military authorities put them on a plane to return to Cairo.

This action by the military may have been prompted by fear that pro-Nasir demonstrations might reach uncontrollable proportions. It suggests that there may be a significant split between the army command and civilian leaders who are proclaiming their desire for Arab unity. [redacted]

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Afghanistan: [From its composition, the new Afghan cabinet, which was named on 13 March, would appear likely to be more sympathetic toward the West than its predecessor.]

[Several of the new ministers have shown receptivity to Western views in the past. These include General Khan Mohammad Khan, the minister of defense, and Dr. Abdul Kayeum, the minister of communications, who cooperated for years with Americans working on the Helmand Valley development project.]

[Former Prime Minister Daud's activities since he retired last week are reported to have aroused fears in some Afghan quarters that he intends new political moves. Some pro-Daud elements are reportedly trying to discredit the change in government, charging that it was inspired by Americans.]

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Somali Republic - UK: [The Somali Government may delay announcing a formal break in relations with the UK approved by Parliament on 14 March in hope that London will further modify its policy toward Kenya's Northern Frontier District.]

[Prime Minister Abdirascid evidently would welcome an opportunity to avoid the break because the UK is an important source of aid. Public opinion and parliamentary opposition might make such a move tantamount to political suicide, however, unless there were further British concessions. The US ambassador believes that Somali leaders probably can accept nothing less than an unequivocal public statement by the British that the future of the disputed area will be decided only after sympathetic consultations are held with interested parties.]

[A call by the Somali minister of defense on 13 March for army volunteers appears designed principally to whip up popular support for the government. Demands for a more aggressive military posture almost certainly will be made, however, when Mogadiscio learns of Ethiopia's plan to withdraw two of its battalions from the Congo--ostensibly for "internal security reasons." The troops are scheduled to disembark at Harar Meda airport near Ethiopia's largely Somali-inhabited Ogaden region.]

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South Korea: [Junta leader General Pak Chong-hui's moves against military factional leaders opposed to him is provoking a critical situation]

[A coup plot exposed on 8 March is being used as a pretext to arrest prominent general officers and lesser military figures who opposed Pak in recent power struggles. Alleging that there is further widespread plotting, Pak is considering the reimposition of emergency martial law and the suspension of all political activity. He is reported to have decided to defer such action "for the time being," probably so that he can assess reactions to his moves]

[These actions suggest that Pak may intend to renege on his promise to transfer the government to civilian control.] Pak and former security chief Kim Chong-pil never intended to give up power, and Pak's announced withdrawal from politics and Kim's departure on a world tour were tactical moves. Pak reportedly planned to eliminate opponents of the regime at an opportune time, after which Kim would return in triumph to Seoul]

[Extensive purges in the military could upset the factional balance, and create disunity that would seriously reduce the country's military capabilities. Attempts to perpetuate the present narrowly based regime would increase the threat of a military or popular upheaval]

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EEC-US: [EEC officials are saying that US insistence on interim guarantees of continued access to EEC markets for American agricultural exports could postpone indefinitely trade and tariff negotiations with the US under the US Trade Expansion Act.]

[These officials recognize that the EEC obligated itself several years ago to consult with the US if imports of American farm products into the Common Market area showed a marked drop as a result of the EEC's Common Agricultural Policy. They warn, however, that US demands for an interim arrangement before the trade and tariff negotiations begin are not acceptable. Their argument is that US inflexibility on this point may lead other countries to assert preconditions or may be used by "certain groups" in the EEC as an excuse not to proceed with the negotiations.]

[The Common Market countries have not ironed out differences among themselves on the Trade Expansion Act; the position of France, in particular, is still uncertain. The EEC Commission, which is representing the Community in the negotiations, generally favors the Act, but must stick to positions on which it can expect support from all the member countries.]

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NOTES

*Argentina: The special security measures adopted on 13 March have now been extended into a full-scale military alert. Apparently the rift within the armed forces over the form of Peronist participation in the June elections is deepening, and a showdown between the rival factions may be imminent.

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Venezuela: The Venezuelan ambassador in Bonn has asked the US Embassy and the West German Foreign Ministry to help run down reports that small arms are being shipped to Venezuelan Communists via Hamburg. As a starter, West German authorities have put out tracers on all recent shipments of such arms.

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Haiti: The Duvalier regime is attempting to exploit the presence of a Czech trade mission in Port-au-Prince to bring pressure on the US to restore some of the cuts that have been made in its economic aid program to Haiti. Two members of Duvalier's cabinet sent word on 12 March to the US Embassy intimating that Haiti may seek bloc help if the US is not more forthcoming. Their pitch is that the Czechs are offering to undertake a number of economic development projects for Haiti, whereas the US, intent on punishing Duvalier, is allowing Haitian children to go hungry.

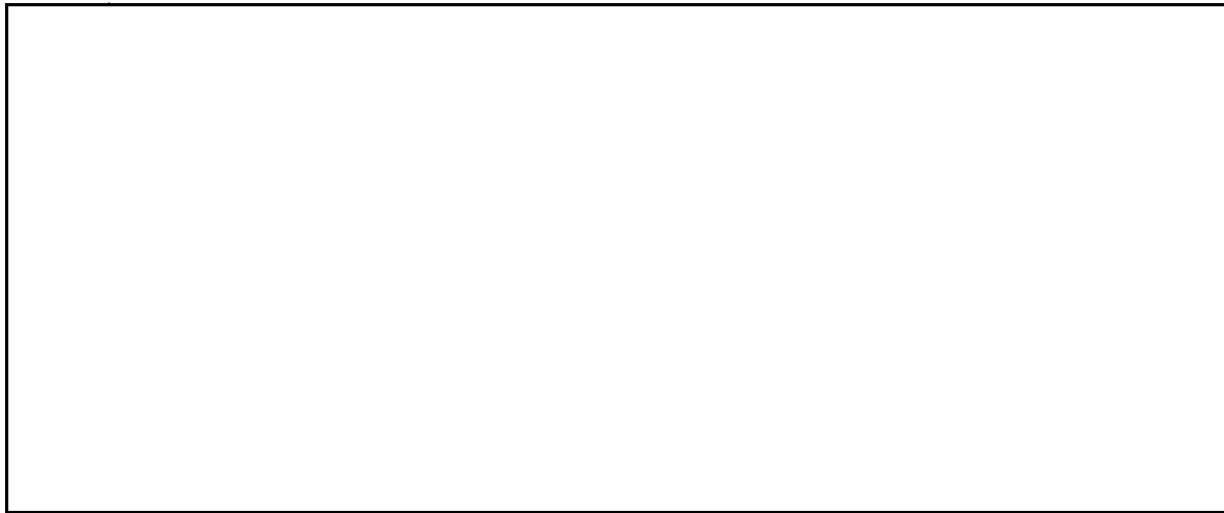
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Canada: With the electoral campaign just past the half-way mark, the US Embassy in Ottawa believes the chances are that no party will emerge from the 8 April elections with a clear majority in Parliament. The Liberal Party is generally conceded to be the front-runner at the moment, but Prime Minister Diefenbaker, fighting for his political life, may close the gap before polling day. Looming in the background is the possibility of sizable gains by the Social Credit Party which could make that party a major disruptive force in Parliament.

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USSR: The regime apparently is attempting to silence dissident writers by putting some of them in mental institutions. Valentin Ovechkin, an established author whose articles have often forecast changes in agricultural policy, apparently was committed several months ago after criticizing Soviet agriculture and warning the party against the rise of a new personality cult. Several other writers are reported to have been consigned to mental institutions during the past year.

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